

TOPIC SHEET 5
RELATIONSHIP WITH SENIORS AND SUBORDINATES

A. INTRODUCTION:

In this topic, we will discuss the unique relationship the Chief Petty Officer has with the enlisted Sailors and the junior officers.

B. ENABLING OBJECTIVES:

- 5.1 Explain the meaning of mentoring.
- 5.2 List the attributes of an effective mentor.
- 5.3 Explain the mentoring responsibilities of the Chief Petty Officer.
- 5.4 Discuss the Chief Petty Officer's obligation to train the junior officer.

C. TOPIC PREPARATION:

- 1. Read: There are no materials to be read prior to this topic.
- 2. Complete: There are no assignments for completion prior to this topic.

D. REFERENCE: None

- 1. SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS: None

E. INSTRUCTION SHEETS:

- 1. TS 5 Relationship with Seniors and Subordinates
- 2. OS 5-1 Relationship with Seniors and Subordinates
- 3. IS 5-2 The Chief, The Division Officer, and Their Roles in the Command

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OUTLINE SHEET 5-1

RELATIONSHIP WITH SENIORS AND SUBORDINATES

A. OUTLINE OF INSTRUCTION:

1. Introduction

A command is not just a collection of people, rather, people interact in patterns, some formal and some informal. The quality of these relationships impacts command excellence.

Supporting with loyalty the endeavors of the chain of command they serve and their fellow Chief Petty Officers with whom they serve (Core Competency).

As we discussed earlier, Chiefs occupy a very unique role in the command structure. You will be senior management for the enlisted Sailors and a unique interface between the enlisted and officers.

In this lesson, we will discuss your relationship with your subordinates and with junior officers.

2. Junior/Senior Relationships

As a Chief, you are both a leader and a follower. As a senior, there are certain expectations you have of your juniors or subordinates. As a junior, there are expectations you have of your seniors.

- a. Seniors' Expectations
- b. Juniors' Expectations
- c. Junior/Senior Expectations

Many of the same qualities that make an effective leader are those that make an effective subordinate.

The effective junior/senior relationship could be described as a "partnership." They understand each other's point of view and realize that real success can only be achieved if they share success.

One of the most important things for a Chief to do is to know and take care of his or her subordinates. Part of taking care of subordinates is teaching or mentoring.

One of the most important traits in a subordinate is a willingness to learn and accept responsibility.

3. Developing Subordinates

Developing enlisted Sailors and junior officers (Core Competency).

Earlier this was discussed as one of your main objectives. One of the key elements is to know your subordinates. Your success as a leader and Chief Petty Officer will depend on your ability to motivate your subordinates. That starts with knowing who they are and what they want. Help them resolve personal problems so they can better focus on their job. Make training opportunities, different jobs, and expert help available. Express positive expectations and provide constructive feedback.

Remember, Chiefs challenge, grow, and develop Sailors.

These are some of the leadership skills that will help you actively lead your division. These are not new. You are already a leader. At the CPO level, you will have greater influence and a larger scope of authority.

Remember it is easier to lead your division if you and they know where you are going. The successful leader has a vision that guides the group. Earlier you started thinking about personal vision and creating an image of where you would like to be in the future. It is important for your division to have a mental image of the future of the division.

Know your subordinates, why they joined the Navy and know their background.

4. Mentoring

Many of you may have someone that gave you advice regarding your career. You may not have thought of that person as your mentor. It may have been your boss or it may have been someone that you just looked to as a role model. Mentors are individuals who have a memorable positive effect on our lives.

Many of you may think of mentoring as part of a formal program. But a mentor could be used to describe any senior teaching a junior, providing career guidance, and preparing them to accept greater responsibility.

Both seniors and juniors have a role in initiating and sustaining the mentoring process. Of course, all seniors have a responsibility to develop their subordinates. But juniors must identify their needs, make those needs specific and seek assistance and advice.

a. What mentors do.

b. What a mentor should not do.

1) Bypass the Chain of Command.

If you are in a mentoring relationship with someone outside your chain of command, never use it as an excuse to bypass the chain of command.

If your boss turns down your training request or if you are dissatisfied with your eval, don't expect your mentor to get involved. Issues like these need to be addressed through the chain of command.

2) Give too many rescues.

Continually rescuing a person is not likely to be helpful in the long run. You become part of the problem if you always bail them out.

3) Show favoritism.

Care must be taken to treat all subordinates equally.

5. Fraternization

When you move from First Class Petty Officer to Chief Petty Officer, the relationship you have to POs in your command must change.

“Personal relationships between Chief Petty Officers (E7-E9) and junior personnel (E1-E6), who are assigned to the command, that are unduly familiar and that do not respect differences in grade or rank are prohibited.”

6. Developing the Division Officer

Officers run the Navy.

Chiefs make the Navy run.

- MCPON Herdt

As discussed in the leadership topic, Chiefs have a special training role regarding junior officers. The chain of command explicitly acknowledges this special role in three ways but always with tact and respect.

First, Chiefs pass on a sense of protocol, history, and a tradition of naval service. Second, Chiefs provide a specific understanding of enlisted attitudes, concerns, and expectations to enable junior officers to better lead the crew. Third, Chiefs provide instruction on technical matters to improve division officers' technical abilities. Chiefs help division officers determine how much they must know to take responsibility for the division's work without being overwhelmed by details.

A Chief's significant influence on a junior officer can set the tone for his entire career.

a. What Chiefs must do to shape a junior officer.

1) Talk, talk, talk with your division officer.

- 2) Don't pull your punches, but don't let your advice sting.
 - 3) Impress upon them the importance of being concerned.
 - 4) Press them to make decisions and handle difficult people.
- b. What junior officers must learn.
- 1) When to speak up and when not to.
 - 2) Trust your Chief, learn from your Chief, but don't be led by your Chief.
 - 3) Take care of your people and they'll take care of business.
 - 4) Don't be afraid of making mistakes.

c. Sharing Secrets of Success

The Chief needs to groom the junior officer. Much of the same knowledge and skills that made you a CPO can be passed on to the JO as guidelines to succeed.

- 1) Never commit to something you cannot deliver. When negotiating a deadline, be 100% confident that you can exceed it. Deliver before the deadline, then do more than expected.
- 2) Meet every deadline. Late work is career suicide. If there is no possible way to meet a deadline, renegotiate it as soon as possible.
- 3) Ask for help. It is a sign of strength, not weakness. Whatever your current task, someone has already done a similar project and has learned what works.
- 4) Search for good opportunities. Volunteer for collateral assignments where you can excel or from which you will grow and learn.
- 5) Choose your battles wisely. Nothing is more futile than fighting for a lost cause. If you choose to fight for something, make it worth your effort.
- 6) If its broken, fix it so it won't break again. When you find something broken, take the opportunity to find ways to improve it. Leave it in the best condition you can.
- 7) Aim as high as you can. Even if you don't hit your target, you'll still be higher than everyone else.
- 8) Know your strengths. Exploit them. Design your workplace to exploit your strengths.

- 9) Know your weaknesses. Improve them through classes, reading, special assignments, and challenges.
- 10) Take care of your people. Your job is to ensure subordinates excel and that they have the tools, time, training and direction needed to do their jobs.
- 11) Make your bosses' job easy. Give them what they want before they know what it is. Unwanted surprises are bad. Pass along bad news as soon as possible. Always keep the boss informed.
- 12) Have fun.

7. Summary

In this lesson we've discussed mentoring in general and more specifically your obligation to train the junior officer. The Navy counts on you to assist the new division officer with guidance on planning and policy decisions. Patience and persistence are the keys to a successful relationship with your junior officer.

**INFORMATION SHEET 5-2
THE CHIEF, THE DIVISION OFFICER,
AND THEIR ROLES IN THE COMMAND**

A. INTRODUCTION:

Information Sheet 5-2 provides an outlook on the roles the Chief Petty Officer plays in the command.

B. REFERENCES:

1. Johnson, C.R. The Chief, The Division Officer and their Roles in the Command.

C. INFORMATION:

**The Chief, the Division Officer, and their Roles in the Command
by
NCCM C.R. Johnson**

It is an old subject, but one that I believe needs to be frankly discussed for the good of all. In today's Navy, it is a sad thing to say that it is rare to find an officer, and in too many cases a Chief, who is very personally attached to the enlisted men who were with them. Too often the chaplain, already overburdened with crises, chaos, and charitable campaigns, the command career counselor, certainly working hard enough to keep our reenlistment rates up, and the Command Master Chief, are the only human repositories available for the anxieties, anguish, and anger which infest many young men and women at one time or another during the early stages of their Navy careers; but it is the enlisted men and women's Division Officer and Chief who should be more involved!

Conversely, a few young Division Officers who mistake popularity for leadership are inclined to over socialize with their men when on liberty to justify their severe, exact, and aloof standards during working hours. This reverse psychology is neither notably successful nor professionally valid. In fact, it is a real "morale buster." It is not that an officer's camaraderie is unappreciated by enlisted men, but the men soon lose confidence in anyone who employs a double standard in his relationships. It also makes it extremely difficult for the Chief to have control in the area of personal appearance when his division officer continually is in need of a haircut, or is otherwise in violation of uniform regulations. The uppermost thing in the Chiefs' mind will probably be, "If I say anything to him, what's my eval going to look like?"

You can believe it or not, but these dual postures--of either professional indifference or private indulgence--are responsible, at least in part, for the low reenlistment rate of many first-term Sailors! This observation is not meant to diminish the ever-present effects of poor pay, inflation, long working hours, and arduous sea duty on reenlistment, but only to amplify the signal that has been generated by many young men in the Navy, many of whom I have talked to about this subject, (as well as other segments of American society) that, "no one really cares." It is increasingly hard to find officers and many Chiefs who know the personal background, family

life, future plans, and troublesome times of their enlisted men and women. Many do not even know of their personnel's marital state and, on rare occasions, are even ignorant of the names of men and women serving in their department or division.

On the positive side, there are still a few Division Officers who keep personal notebooks which contain data on the Sailors in their division, together with the names of their wives, parents, and children-and even the children's birth dates. But this information, so readily accessible to a Chief, many times is ignored. Yet, in retrospect, this small element of personal knowledge is perhaps the most important collateral asset of every good Division Officer and Chief, for without it their pose of sincere concern over an enlisted man during an individual crisis is a shame. For example, feeble attempts to discover what caused a breach of discipline, after the fact, often have uncovered a bonanza of ignorance concerning the man or woman on the part of the Division Officer or Chief. In this instance comes the historical lament, "I don't know, sir, but I'll find out," which is as embarrassing as a battleship on a sand bar.

One of the reasons that some officers and Chiefs do not have this real attachment to their personnel is that in many cases some commands in the Navy discourage positive relationships. Some Commanding Officers expect and encourage personal confidences between the chaplain, career counselor or what have you, and the men; instead, they really should deplore the fact that it is these personnel and not the department head, Division Officer, or Division Chief who has taken control of many of the tasks which rightly fall under the leadership guidon. Turenne said, "You must love soldiers in order to understand them, and understand them in order to lead them." Obviously both tenants require you must first know them, and intimate knowledge of enlisted men and women is unfortunately not a common trait in officers and Chiefs today. A Division Officer who honestly states to the Captain that, "I didn't realize that the man had family problems; in fact, I didn't even know he was married," should be barred from making recommendations concerning this man's punishment. If a Division Officer or Chief has such a limited knowledge of the fundamentals of leadership, it is doubtful that he will be blessed with rare disciplinary insight.

Throughout history all great generals and admirals had this insight and, though they were exceptionally stern when their hard corps regulations were violated, they also were exceptionally close to their men throughout their careers and unmoved by petty charges against veteran fighters whenever legal nonsense appeared. (When two of Napoleon's veterans were brought into his presence for stealing grapes from the Emperor's vineyard, Napoleon merely dismissed them with the advice, "wait until they are ripe.") This ability of military leaders to weigh values, maintain control, and judge combat troops requires close officer-enlisted relationships, personal attachments, objective appraisals, and fine measure of compassion. And those elements need not prejudice either leadership or discipline; in fact, they allow these factors to function more effectively. But the key, of course, is the professional experience which derives from each officer's familiarity with the prospects and problems of every enlisted man and woman who serves with him (or her) not under him (or her). It is not achieved by osmosis.

Additionally, it is not enough for an officer or a Chief just to make an effort to know his men. They must concern themselves with them! Occasional knowledge, like occasional virtue, does not imply any long range values. Every Division Officer and Chief should have detailed

information on every enlisted man and woman in their division and should carefully brief their successors on each individual Sailor. Today's too-rapid turnover of leadership personnel in fleet units is an inherent obstacle to any personnel stability program, but until assignment policies permit long-term affiliations, each unit commander at least should attempt to initiate the closest officer-enlisted relationships which are possible in his command under the present circumstances. Though fiction writers find it far-fetched, officers and enlisted men have been known to like each other! The professional measure of a Division Officer and Division Chief today also has become less and less related to the way they run their divisions. Often the department head is held responsible for work schedules, the legal officer for discipline, the chaplain for morale, the Commanding Officer for leadership, the education officer for training, the career counselor for reenlistment, and the Executive Officer for the annual all hands picnic.

The assumed assignments obviously leave the Division Officer and even worse, the Division Chief, with very little personal responsibility for his men. In fact, they really are now denied many of the opportunities to meet, counsel, and concern themselves with the very functions which should be in their domain. Therefore, since they are no longer assigned primary responsibility for the actions of their personnel, nor graded according to their relationships with them, it is understandable (though very disappointing) that the Division Officer and the Chief often do not even try to fuse their character or instill a unit spirit into their personnel. More importantly, the personal attachment which could and should exist between the Division Officer, Chief, and their men has been destroyed by such organizational diversification. This spread pattern of responsibility, incidentally, was planned originally to benefit enlisted men and women, but there are indications that this pillar-to-post policy may have been responsible for placing them in that limbo where "no one really cares."

Now, before anyone wants to roast me over hot coals, hang me in effigy, or just say I am "picking on them," I want to say I am not merely talking about one specific command in these comments--I am talking about the entire Navy. In fact, I believe we do pretty well in this command (if I didn't I would say so). But--I still see far too much familiarity (the wrong kind) between enlisted and junior officers, and too many Chiefs and first classes who have lousy attitudes and just don't give a damn! So--if the shoe fits (as the old saying goes) wear it. But, let's all work together and try to turn it around. It's called **PROFESSIONALISM!**